

Last year, I cosponsored the Victim Rights Clarification Act of 1997. That legislation reversed a presumption against crime victims observing the fact phase of a trial if they were likely to provide testimony during the sentencing phase of that trial. As a result of that legislation, not only were victims of the Oklahoma City bombing able to observe the trial of Timothy McVeigh, all those who were able to witness the trial and were called as witnesses to provide victim impact testimony at the sentencing phase of that trial, were able to do so.

The Crime Victims Assistance Act, S. 1081, is legislation that I introduced this past July with Senator KENNEDY. It builds upon the progress made over the last several years. It provides for a wholesale reform of the Federal Rules and Federal law to establish additional rights and protections for victims of federal crime.

This bill would provide crime victims with an enhanced right to be heard on the issue of pretrial detention and plea bargains, an enhanced right to a speedy trial and to be present in the courtroom throughout a trial, an enhanced right to be heard on probation revocation and to give a statement at sentencing, and the right to be notified of a defendant's escape or release from prison.

The Crime Victims Assistance Act would also strengthen victims' services by increasing Federal victim assistance personnel, enhancing training for State and local law enforcement and Officers of the Court, and establishing an ombudsman program for crime victims.

With a simple majority of both Houses of Congress, the Crime Victims Assistance Act could be enacted this year and we could mark a significant and immediate difference in the lives of victims throughout our country. I hope that the Senate will turn to this important measure, as well, in our efforts to assist victims of crime.

One unfortunate consequence of the effort to focus attention on proposals to amend the Constitution has been to dissipate efforts to enact effective victims rights legislation over the past two years. The momentum we had built over the last several years has been dissipated by this constitutional focus and exclusion of statutory reform.

While we have made great improvements in our law enforcement and crime victims assistance programs and have made advances in recognizing crime victims' rights, we still have work to do. Each year I try to help focus attention on those who work so hard every week of the year on behalf of all crime victims in crime victims' assistance and compensation programs. Their hard work and dedication have made a real difference in the lives of people who suffer from violence and abuse.

The needs of victims of crime are many and must be addressed in a num-

ber of ways, including strengthening law enforcement and education, improving and increasing services for victims, and protecting the rights of victims. I am hopeful that in the days to come, the research directed by the Crime Victims with Disabilities Awareness Act will serve as the foundation for the growth and improvement of services available to victims with disabilities throughout our country.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee substitute be agreed to, the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill appear in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1976), as amended, was considered read the third time and passed.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to compliment my colleagues for the unanimous passage of the Crime Victims with Disabilities Awareness Act of 1998. When I introduced this legislation, S. 1976, I wanted to increase public awareness of the plight of crime victims with disabilities—by developing a research and statistical basis from which to understand the nature and extent of crimes against people with developmental disabilities.

Gauging from the favorable response of my colleagues, the press, and people in the disability community itself, public awareness of the crime victims with developmental disabilities has increased by the very introduction of this legislation. But we recognize that this is only the tip of the iceberg—the larger problem is crimes against people with many other kinds of disabilities as well.

Passage of this legislation comes not a moment too soon. It is time that we began a new, hopeful chapter in the lives of the many disabled individuals who live quietly in fear of crime and violence.

There are too many victims who cannot communicate what has happened to them—who find it more difficult than most crime victims to seek comfort, counseling, reassurance, and protection. These victims must relive the violence for the rest of their lives.

Today, as a governing body, the United States Senate has spoken collectively on this increasing challenge. We know that for a number of reasons, more people are being born developmentally disabled. Among the factors are poor prenatal nutrition, increases in child abuse, and substance abuse issues, including fetal alcohol syndrome.

It is my hope that the Department of Justice will engage the Committee on Law and Justice of the National Research Council to produce seminal, multi-disciplinary research that will encourage further academic research in this area, and develop useful new strat-

egies to reduce the incidence of crimes against the disabled. America should not have to rely upon foreign countries to infer research and statistics about our own citizens.

Passage of this legislation is an important recognition of the severity of the impact crime has on these people's lives. It is an attempt to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. We will not let the disabled suffer alone and in silence any longer. As a country we must understand them, learn to communicate with them, and reassure them.

This is a very important step forward for American society.

I thank my colleagues, and I yield the floor.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 14, 1998

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it stands in adjournment until 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 14. I further ask that when the Senate reconvenes on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the routine requests through the morning hour be granted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALLARD. I further ask consent that the Senate stand in recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m., to allow the weekly party caucuses to meet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. ALLARD. For the information of all Senators, on Tuesday morning, under a previous order, the Senate will debate the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the Daschle amendment, with a vote occurring on the motion at 10 a.m. Following that vote, the Senate will continue consideration of the agriculture appropriations bill with the hope of finishing the bill by early evening.

For the remainder of the week, it is hoped that the Senate will complete several more appropriations bills. Members are reminded that the Leader Lecture Series, hosted by the majority leader, will be held tomorrow night at 6 p.m. in the old Senate Chamber. The Speaker will be former Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker.

Also, on Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. there will be a joint meeting of Congress in the House Chamber to receive an address by the President of Romania.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ALLARD. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, following the remarks of the Senator from New Jersey, Senator LAUTENBERG.